

# Local Newscaster & Founder of For Spacious Skies

A few words, no matter how well considered, cannot adequately sum up any life, and for the life of Jacob "Jack" Borden, a life filled with so many diverse friends and interests, the task is daunting.

Jack passed away December 19, 2020. His life was, to the last day, a work in progress. For Jack, every day was another opportunity to engage with the world and anyone he met.

Jack grew up in Hartford. He was a graduate of Weaver High School. With one year at the University of Connecticut behind him, he enlisted in the Army. He served in the 25th Infantry Division stationed in Osaka Japan, attaining the rank of technical sergeant as a radio operator. He would quite often remind you he was also an expert marksman. Jack eventually returned to UConn to graduate with a degree in journalism. He was now prepared to embark on a career in radio and television.

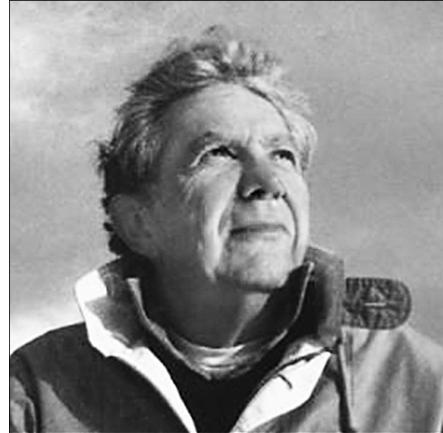
His career in radio started at WHAY in New Britain, CT. As host of a classical music program he would get records from the Hartford Public Library. While returning a borrowed recording of Beethoven's 7th he met a beautiful young librarian, Jeanette (Jan) Thouin, and there began a relationship that lasted for 65 wonderful years. They married in 1955. Jack often said that marrying Jan was the best thing he ever did. A year later their daughter Blair was born and two years later their son Deryl arrived.

In the early sixties the family moved to Boston where Jack took a job at WBZ-TV. For many years he was a familiar face as a weeknight reporter and weekend anchor. He made many great friends there and would continue to get together with them until just a few years ago. While he was a popular straight news reporter, Jack gained much notoriety in Boston from his assignments to lampoon venerable

Boston institutions.

Jack and Jan both had a passion for the outdoors, taking long country walks at the Great Meadows in Concord, or at the Quabbin Reservoir. On one of these outings in 1978, Jack had a life changing experience. After snoozing for a few minutes in a wooded clearing at the Wachusett Meadows Wildlife Sanctuary, he opened his eyes, and looking straight up, "saw more of the sky in a millisecond than I had in my entire forty-nine years up to that point." It was as if he was seeing the sky for the first time. From that day he became committed to promoting the beauty of the sky as a visual feast that anyone, anywhere, and at any time could partake. He was so committed that he eventually left his fulltime reporting job at WBZ and founded the non-profit: For Spacious Skies. He appeared in hundreds of publications including The New York Times, The Boston Globe and the Smithsonian. In honor of his 92nd birthday, April 14, 2020 was nationally recognized as "Look Up at the Sky Day".

Jack's grandson, Ian, remembers Poppy as a man who liked to listen more than he liked to talk; he would prefer to learn more about you than talk about himself. That in a few words was the essence of Jack Borden. A caring, inquisitive, wonderful man with a beautiful mind. Jack had a great sense of humor. He was the consummate jokester and prankster. Nobody, whether family member or friend was safe from a good-natured Jack Borden prank. It seemed like he really did know something about everything. And if he didn't know it, even at 92 he would Google it on his iPad or as he referred to it "his brain". He was an incredible historian for his number 1 passion, baseball. He was always ready for a backyard catch. Even into his eighties he could make your glove hand sting. Jack was also well known for the mileage he would



get out of his cars. His famed Dodge Dart was driven over 400 thousand miles.

In 2015, his son Deryl, lost a short battle with cancer. Much like his father and mother he was well known as a most kind, generous and funny man, but most of all, as a devoted father of Ian and Max.

In December 2018, Jack lost his soulmate of 65 years when Jeanette passed away. She will be remembered by those who knew her as kind, generous and a world class baker. After Jan's passing hardly a day went by when Jack did not see her in his dreams.

After Jan's passing, Jack moved into Youville Place in Lexington. There he found a new audience for his famous one liners: "I'm so old I don't buy green bananas anymore", "Take 2 and hit to right" and "See you in court!" He truly enjoyed his time there, made many great friends and got to continue to spread the word about For Spacious Skies.

Jack is survived by his beloved daughter, Blair Ruocco and her husband, Neil. Most special Poppy to Sam & Sydney Ruocco, Max & Ian Borden, and great grandfather to Evelyn Borden. Also survived by special nephew Jeffrey Winnick, niece Gail Pepin, other extended family and longtime close friend Joe "V".

May we all rest assured knowing Jack will always be watching us from his favorite place, the sky.

A memorial service will be held at a later date.